

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 01805 181318Z

51 17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-10 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01

NIC-01 (ISO) W

----- 084341

O R 181044Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2821

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

CINCPAC

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 1805

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: GVN DROPS OLD CHARGES AGAINST PRESS

1. THE MOI ANNOUNCED FEB 17 THAT LONG-STANDING CASES AGAINST SIX SAIGON DAILIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE PRESS CODE BY PRINTING LIBELOUS MATTER ABOUT THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT WOULD BE DROPPED. THREE OF THE CASES INVOLVE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS BY CHINH LUAN, TIA SANG AND DONG PHUONG FOR PUBLICATION OF MATERIAL ABOUT VICE PRESIDENT HUONG.

2. THE CASES AGAINST THE OTHER THREE, SONG THAN, DIEN TIN AND DAI DAN TOC, ARE BASED ON THE PUBLICATION BY THESE DAILIES OF PACM INDICTMENT NO. 1, ALLEGING PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN CORRUPTION BY PRESIDENT THIEU. THESE CASES HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR HEARINGS TWICE PREVIOUSLY AND HAD BEEN THE OCCASION FOR DEMONSTRATIONS BY
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FR. THANH'S PACM ON OCT 31 AND NOV 28. IN BOTH INSTANCES

HEARINGS WERE POSTPONED. THE MOI ANNOUNCEMENT EXPLAINED THAT IN BIEW OF GVN'S RECENT ARREST OF A NUMBER OF ALLEGED COMMUNIST CADRE WHO HAD INFILTRATED THE PRESS COMMUNITY AND THE CLOSING OF FOUR OF THE SIX DAILIES INVOLVED (ALL BUT CHINH LUAN AND DAI DAN TOC), NO FURTHER ACTION WAS REQUIRED.

3. COMMENT: WE ARE TOLD BY AN MOI SOURCE THAT THE GVN CONTEMPLATES NO ACTION TO PROSECUTE THE PAPERS FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE PACM "INDICTMENT NO. 2" ON FEB 2 FOR WHICH NINE PAPERS WERE CONFISCATED. IF THIS IS TRUE, INDEPENDENT CHINH LUAN AND EXTREME OPPOSITION DAI DAN TOC ARE FREE OF ANY PENDING GOVERNMENT LEGAL ACTIONS. FOR SOME TIME NOW THE GVN HAS SHOWN NO REAL DESIRE TO PROSECUTE THESE CASES TO A CONCLUSION AND HAS NOW TAKEN THE RECENT EVENTS IN THE PRESS WORLD AS AN OCCASION TO TERMINATE ACTION ON THEM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LITIGATION, NEWSPAPERS, INFORMATION CONTROL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SAIGON01805
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750058-0018
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750235/aaaabfez.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <20 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GVN DROPS OLD CHARGES AGAINST PRESS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, VS, CHINH LUAN, TIA SANG, DONG PHUONG, SONG THAN, DIEN TIN, DAI DAN TOC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006